

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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SUBJECT: REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA

REF: STATE 157953, BANGKOK 17849

1. SUMMARY: FOLLOWING IS INTERVIEW WITH CAMBODIAN REFUGEE,
SOURCE C. END SUMMARY.

2. SOURCE C, A FORMER BARBER, ARRIVED IN THAILAND MARCH 1,
1978, FROM SIEM REAP PROVINCE. AFTER APRIL 1975, HE WAS ORDERED
TO BECOME A FARMER LIKE EVERYONE ELSE. SOURCE C IS ABOUT 28.
HIS ACCOUNT FOLLOWS:

3. QTE CONDITIONS OF LIFE IN DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA. I LIVED IN
A VILLAGE OF 550 PEOPLE IN SIEM REAP PROVINCE. ABOUT HALF OF
THE PEOPLE WERE "OLD CAMBODIANS" AND HALF WERE "NEW CAMBODIANS"
(NOT UNDER KHMER ROUGE BEFORE APRIL 1975). DURING THE RAINY
SEASON, WE WORKED IN THE FIELDS AND IN THE DRY SEASON, WE WORKED
DIGGING CANALS AND BUILDING DAMS. IN MY VILLAGE, THE RICE CROP
DECREASED YEAR BY YEAR SINCE 1975. I THINK THAT INADEQUATE
FERTILIZER WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DECREASES.

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4. QTE WE ATE TWICE EACH DAY. FOR A FEW MONTHS IN 1975,
WE HAD RICE EACH DAY. AFTER THAT, WE RECEIVED ONLY PORRIDGE,
BUT NOT ENOUGH. WE RECEIVED ABOUT THE SAME AMOUNTS UNTIL I ESCAPED.

5. QTE SYSTEM OF ADMINISTRATION AND DISCIPLINE. WE HAD TO ATTEND
WEEKLY MEETINGS IN THE VILLAGE. IN THE MEETINGS, THE VILLAGE
CHIEF ONLY TALKED ABOUT PRODUCTION AND THE NEED TO WORK HARD

TO BUILD DAMS. THE "OLD CAMBODIANS" COULD GIVE SUGGESTIONS, BUT THE "NEW CAMBODIANS" COULD NOT.

6. QTE IF THE "NEW PEOPLE" WERE LATE FOR WORK, SICK OR DID NOT HAVE PERMISSION TO DO SOMETHING, THE GROUP CHIEF WOULD TELL THE VILLAGE CHIEF, WHO WOULD CALL YOU IN AND GIVE YOU A REPRIMAND THE FIRST AND SECOND TIME. IF YOU STOLE A LITTLE FOOD FROM SOMEONE, THE SAME THING HAPPENED. IF A "NEW CAMBODIAN" RAISED A POTATO NEAR HIS HOUSE AND ATE IT WITHOUT GETTING THE PERMISSION OF THE GROUP CHIEF, YOU WOULD BE REPRIMANDED THE FIRST AND SECOND TIME. THE THIRD TIME YOU WOULD BE "SENT TO ANGKA LEU" (EXECUTED).

7. QTE IF YOU WERE A "NEW CAMBODIAN" AND HAD PROBLEMS, TOO MUCH WORK, OR IF SOMEONE WAS TAKING ADVANTAGE OF YOU, YOU HAD NO RECOURSE. OLD CAMBODIANS COULD TELL THE GROUP CHIEF. IF YOU WERE BEATEN UP BY AN "OLD CAMBODIAN," IT WAS TOO BAD. THE "NEW PEOPLE" WERE ALWAYS WRONG AND THE "OLD" ALWAYS RIGHT. IF THE GROUP CHIEF HIT YOU, YOU COULD NOT COMPLAIN TO THE VILLAGE CHIEF, BECAUSE THE GROUP CHIEF WOULD TELL THE VILLAGE CHIEF THAT YOU WERE A "NEW PERSON," DID NOT LIKE TO WORK, AND DO NOT LIKE THE NEW REGIME.

8. QTE EXECUTIONS. I DECIDED TO ESCAPE BECAUSE THE KHMER ROUGE WANTED TO KILL ME. I WAS ASSIGNED TO WORK FAR FROM MY VILLAGE. ONE NIGHT EIGHT OF US, WHO WERE "NEW CAMBODIANS," WERE INVITED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO "ATTEND A MEETING." WHEN WE ARRIVED, THE KHMER ROUGE ORDERED US TO BE TIED UP. THE SEVEN OTHERS WERE TIED, BUT I ESCAPED AND RAN AWAY. OF THE SEVEN, THREE WERE FORMER SOLDIERS AND FOUR WERE SIMPLE FARMERS. I DID NOT UNDERSTAND PRECISELY WHY WE WERE CALLED. THERE WERE MANY SUCH MEETINGS, BUT USUALLY WHEN WE ATTENDED WE WERE NOT TIED UP. I HAD HEARD OF THIS HAPPENING BEFORE--PEOPLE WERE CALLED IN THE NIGHT AND THEN EXECUTED.

9. QTE I LEARNED FROM NEIGHBORS THAT I WAS TO BE KILLED. I ASKED, "WHY?" BECAUSE I HAD DONE NOTHING WRONG. THE NEIGHBORS TOLD ME ONLY THAT PEOPLE WERE BEING KILLED. EARLIER, I WAS WALKING AROUND AND I OVERHEARD THE KHMER ROUGE TELL "OLD CAMBODIANS," WE DO NOT TRUST THE LON NOL PEOPLE AND DO NOT LIKE TO KEEP THEM."

10. QTE I HAD TWO BROTHERS AND A BROTHER-IN-LAW WHO WERE KILLED. MY BROTHERS WERE 26 AND 24 IN 1975. THEY HAD NOT BEEN CONSCRIPTED IN THE LON NOL ARMY, BUT THEIR NAMES HAD BEEN REGISTERED. THE KHMER ROUGE FOUND THEIR NAMES ON GKR LISTS AND KILLED THEM JUST TWO MONTHS AFTER THE TAKEOVER IN 1975. MY BROTHER-IN-LAW WAS ALSO KILLED, BUT HE WAS A FORMER SOLDIER.

11. QTE AT THAT TIME, THE KHMER ROUGE ASSEMBLED ALL THE SOLDIERS,

TELLING THE SOLDIERS THAT THEY WOULD "BE RETRAINED." BUT IN
FACT THEY WERE EXECUTED. MANY PEOPLE SAW THE EXECUTION SITES.
I MYSELF SAW AN EXECUTION SITE AT KOK DONG. THERE WERE ONLY
BONES, PERHAPS 400 SKELETONS THERE. AT THE TIME, I WAS ASSIGNED
TO WORK THERE. THE SOLDIERS' WIVES WERE NOT HARMED. END QTE
O'DONOHUE

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